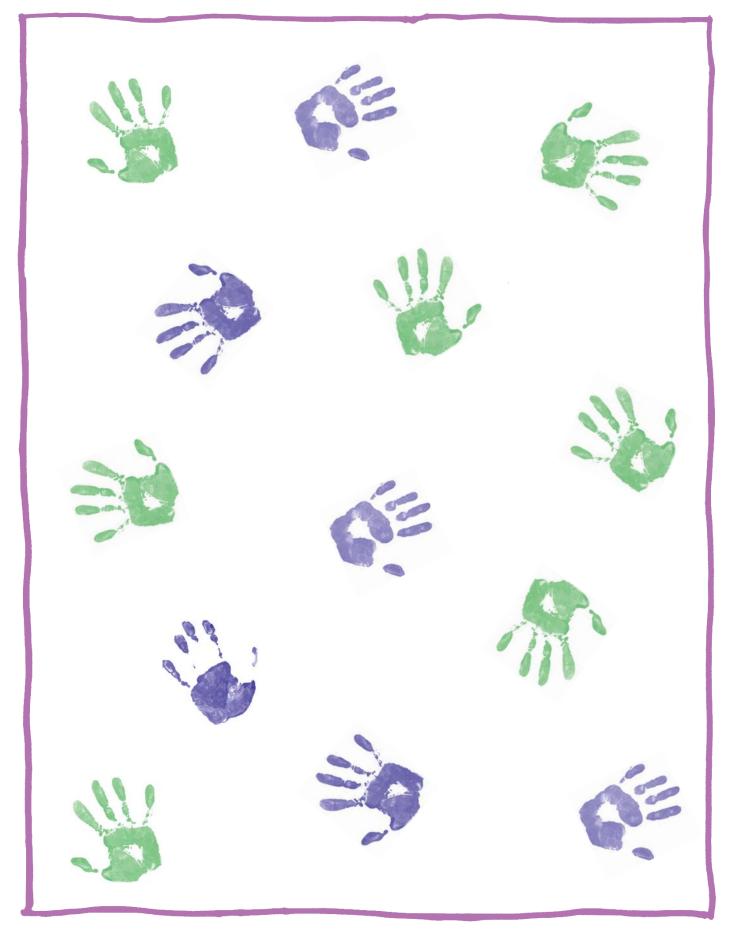
# San Diego County Children and Families Commission





A Community Inclusion Plan

June 2001



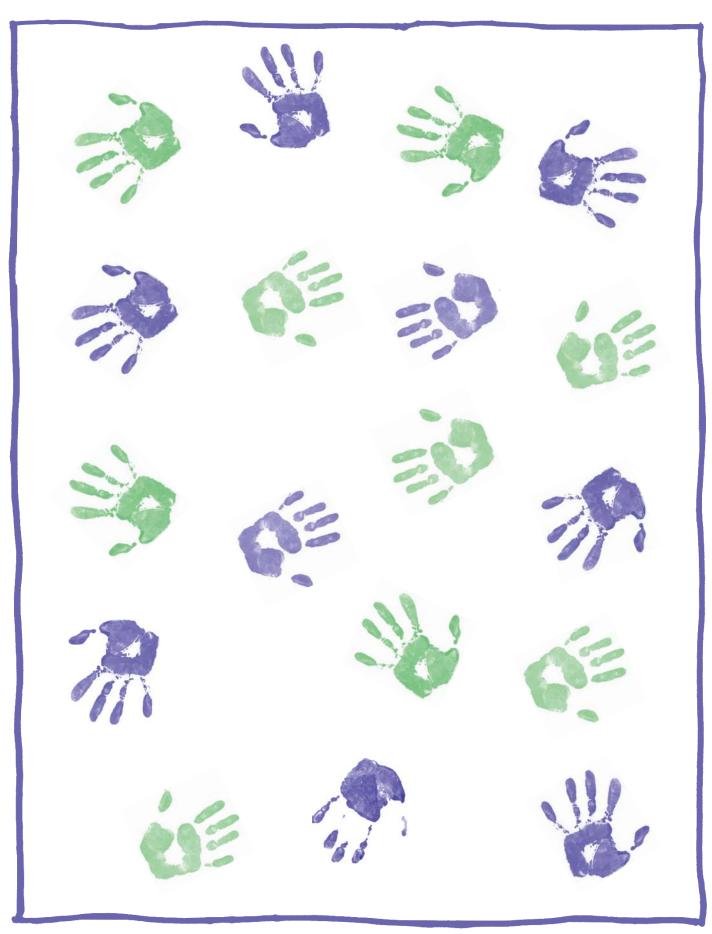
## San Diego County Children and Families Commission



A Community Inclusion Plan

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What is the Children and Families Commission?

In November 1998, California voters passed the California Children and Families Act (Proposition 10). This statewide ballot initiative increased the tax on cigarettes and tobacco products. The revenue is used to promote early childhood development from the prenatal period to age five. The intent is for all children to enter school physically, mentally, socially and developmentally ready to learn. The initiative generates approximately \$700 million per year statewide, of which the San Diego County Children and Families Commission (SDCCFC or "the Commission") receives about \$40 million annually.

The Commission is responsible for ensuring that the Prop 10 funds received from the State are used responsibly and in ways that best meet the needs of all children in every community of San Diego County. Accordingly, the Commission regularly seeks community input to understand community needs and to make its funding decisions.

### Why is community input important?

With approximately \$40 million per year to spend, it is very important for the Commission to hear directly from local communities regarding what will work best in their neighborhoods and how the Commission should direct its energies. Research tells us that community-based (or grassroots) solutions are most effective. With a strong desire to visibly improve school readiness among children, ages 0-5, the Commission relies on community input in forming its funding strategies. Engaging local communities:

- © Creates opportunities for heightened community involvement
- Brings together diverse people and perspectives for the ongoing support of young children and their families
- Builds and strengthens "civic infrastructure" in the community that can support long-term improvement in problems facing children and their families

### How will the Commission seek community input?

The Commission will use a variety of methods to seek community input such as public meetings, community conversations hosted by local collaboratives and community organizations, ethnic outreach and telephone surveys. In the year 2001 and beyond, the Commission intends to expand its outreach efforts to better reach every segment of San Diego County.



### What is this Community Inclusion Plan?

This Community Inclusion Plan outlines strategies that will be used to promote community understanding of Prop 10 issues and public participation in Commission decision-making and prioritizing. The plan was created by a Leadership Team composed of representatives from health care, social services, community education, public broadcasting, public agencies and the faith community. The Plan provides guiding principles and strategies for accomplishing the Commission's goals through community inclusion. It does not mandate any particular approach, but offers a "toolbox" of ideas that can be used to promote Commission goals.

#### **Appendices**

Appendix A provides a more detailed overview of the Children and Families Commission and its responsibility to partner with the community.

Appendix B provides a matrix of community engagement strategies that may be employed in outreach to specific target audiences.

## **Guiding Principles**

The following guiding principles will be used to engage the community in planning and decision-making:

- San Diego communities possess our greatest assets. Their participation in Commission planning, problem solving and funding decisions is essential to the Commission's success.
- The sharing of information is an essential element in promoting the vision of Proposition 10, facilitating community involvement, and increasing community awareness and understanding of children ages zero to five and their families.
- Effective community involvement is an ongoing process requiring dedication and accountability.





# **Community Engagement**

**Guiding Principle:** San Diego communities possess our greatest assets. Their participation in Commission planning, problem solving and funding decisions is essential to the Commission's success.

#### **Desired Results**

- The Commission is committed to working with all San Diego communities as a way of doing business.
- The Commission goes into the community to ask, share, and listen to diverse perspectives, and the community influences the Commission's decisions.
- The Commission enjoys active and continuous participation of all interested and involved parties.
- Individuals and groups possess the knowledge and experience necessary to ensure a meaningful dialogue on needs, existing resources and potential solutions.
- Parents and communities understand their roles in planning and decision-making and believe their input will impact the future of their children.
- San Diego communities are engaged in Commission planning and problem solving.

#### **Methods**

Involve all members of the community in planning and problem solving, including:

- Parents and caregivers
- © Community providers: health care, social services, collaboratives, community-based non-profit organizations
- Businesses, as employers of parents and as members of the community
- © Government agencies, including the County Health and Human Services Agency, the State Children and Families Commission, and cities

- © Child care and development professionals and child care providers
- Ohild care associations and academic programs
- Schools, pre-schools, school-based teen pregnancy programs, and PTA's



#### Solicit community input through:

- Public comments at Commission and Technical and Professional Advisory Committee (TPAC)
   meetings
- © Commission and/or TPAC meetings held in various sites throughout the County
- © Community conversations and focus groups on specific topics of concern
- Direct contact with individual community members
- Surveys

#### Support family and community participation

- Use open and inclusive processes
- ♦ Use simple and easy to understand language, information, instructions
- ♦ Use multi-media approaches to encourage understanding and participation
- © Employ participatory, fun, and simple activities
- Ensure that activities are culturally tailored (e.g., opportunities to speak or to submit questions in writing, culturally suitable food)
- PRely on the TPAC and Leadership Team for guidance on including all communities
- Use existing forums, such as community-based organizations, collaboratives, family resource centers and other community groups, that have already established trusting relationships with their communities
- Hold meetings at times and places convenient to community members
- Provide translation, transportation, and child care
- Ensure that gatherings are informal, family friendly and culturally appropriate in setting and format

#### Maintain ongoing two-way communication with community participants

- Acknowledge the group input and tell them how it will be used
- Assign a group or person for participants to call if questions arise
- Follow-up with calls, letters, and reports
- Establish task groups to assist in clarifying issues and making recommendations

#### Build the capacity of community members and groups to become involved and take part in solutions

- © Encourage and support parents and families into taking action
- Foster partnerships and collaborations among community groups
- Maintain ongoing conversations with groups to strengthen their advocacy skills through involvement with the Commission and Prop 10
- Provide leadership training



# Community Information Sharing

**Guiding Principle:** The sharing of information is an essential element in promoting the vision of Proposition 10, facilitating community involvement, and increasing community awareness and understanding of children ages zero to five and their families.

#### **Desired Results**

- The Commission provides information to San Diego communities about State and local Commission activities in formats that are user-friendly and culturally and linguistically appropriate.
- © Commission educational activities are responsive to the needs of all of San Diego's diverse communities.
- Parent and community awareness of resources and issues regarding early childhood development is enhanced through State and local Commission activities.

#### **Methods**

#### Include appropriate target audiences, such as:

- ♦ Schools
- ♦ Churches
- Ommunity-based organizations-
- ♥ Collaboratives

- O Child care programs
- Ohild care and parenting education programs
- ♦ Internal partners



#### Tailor information materials to the target audiences

- ♥ Culturally appropriate content
- Accessible language and literacy levels
- Visual presentation of information (such as use of Geographic Information Systems mapping technology to communicate data, e.g. shortages of child care centers or locations with a high incidence of preventable injuries)
- Materials that complement activities, materials and resources available through the State Commission

#### Distribute information through a wide variety of channels, including:

- - Newsletters or communication briefs highlighting resources and key Prop 10 projects, including State and local Commission activities
  - Inserts or articles issued periodically for key magazines (e.g. San Diego Parent Magazine) highlighting resources and Prop 10 projects
  - Materials about Commission goals, activities, and events
  - Media alerts
  - Press releases on grant awards and recipients
- - Radio spots and radio dialogues on issues relating to children and families by community leaders and Prop 10 Commissioners
  - Features on local child care and parenting resources on children's programming and local ethnic television and radio
  - Media alerts
  - Public Service Announcements
- Website featuring grant opportunities, Prop 10 success stories and hyperlinks to other relevant web sites
- Existing community organizations such as libraries, ESL classes, faith communities and business and professional associations
- Private sector businesses focused on families and children
- A speakers' bureau composed of Commission, TPAC, Leadership Team members, Commission staff and other appropriate experts
- © Community events, at which Commission partners such as TPAC, Leadership Teams, grantees, and CBOs distribute Prop 10 materials
- © Educational forums and professional symposia



# Continuous Improvement

**Guiding Principle:** Effective community involvement is an ongoing process requiring dedication and accountability.

#### **Desired Results**

- The Commission maintains trust within San Diego communities.
- ♦ San Diego communities recognize the impact of the Commission in the area of school readiness.

#### **Methods**

The Commission's overall evaluation plan will include components to assess the effectiveness of the Commission's community engagement activities.

#### The Commission will report back to the community on

- Funding decisions made by the Commission using community input
- Results of funded activities
- ♦ Inclusion process of funded activities

The Commission will seek feedback from the community on the effectiveness of Prop 10 funded projects.







## **Commission Structure and Roles**

# California Children and Families Commission (CCFC)

The California Children and Families Commission (CCFC) anticipates collecting about \$700 million per year in State Prop 10 taxes. Eighty percent of that money will be disbursed to local commissions for funding solutions created at the community level. The remaining 20 percent will be retained by the State to provide statewide public relations, initiatives, and administration. CCFC has initiated a statewide media campaign that includes television and radio commercials which promote the goals of Prop 10. CCFC has also hired a public relations firm, to provide technical assistance to counties in connecting with their local media markets.

# San Diego County Children and Families Commission

The San Diego County Children and Families Commission was established to implement Proposition 10 at the local level. The San Diego Children and Families Commission was established by the Board of Supervisors in the County Administrative Code. The Commission consists of five members: one member of the Board of Supervisors; two at-large members nominated by members of the Board of Supervisors on a rotating basis; the Director of the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency; and a County employee nominated by the Director of the Health and Human Services Agency from among persons responsible for the management of child serving programs.

The Commission is responsible for adopting a strategic plan for the support and improvement of early childhood development within the County. The strategic plan describes how programs, strategies, and projects relating to early childhood development within the County will be integrated into a consumer-oriented and easily accessible system. The Commission is also responsible for the allocation of Proposition 10 revenue. Consistent with State law, the strategic plan, including revenue allocation, is prepared with broad public input, and is reviewed annually by the Commission to ensure that Proposition 10 dollars are spent in the most effective and efficient way possible to reach all children, ages zero to five.



#### Commission Infrastructure

Although the Commission is a department of the County of San Diego, it is autonomous from the San Diego County Board of Supervisors for strategic planning and the expenditure of dollars. To direct strategic planning and the administrative, fiscal, community relations, and grant making functions of the Commission, the Commission has appointed an Executive Director and a small core of staff. For economy and efficiency, the Commission purchases most legal, fiscal, and administrative services from the County of San Diego.

### Technical and Professional Advisory Committee (TPAC)

The Commission is advised by a 15 member Technical and Professional Advisory Committee (TPAC). Mandated by State law, TPAC is comprised of professionals representing many segments of the local community, including health care providers, child development specialists, researchers, educators, community-based service providers, and parent educators. TPAC's membership is diverse in gender, ethnicity, and regional representation. The role of TPAC is to provide the Commission information on community needs, existing resources, research and best practices, and to advise the Commission on strategic planning, assuring broad public input into the planning process.

### Community Engagement

Given the complexity of systems and supports for children ages zero to five and their families, the Commission is challenged by the task of maintaining knowledge of community needs and priorities. To meet this challenge, the Commission is committed to fostering inclusive governance, including public education and sustained public engagement of typically under-represented communities.

Through ongoing community engagement efforts, the Commission and its staff seek to maintain broad community relations, including input regarding assets, needs, and priorities. The Commission has sought partnerships with foundations for financial support and technical assistance in the areas of civic engagement, inclusive governance, and results-based accountability.

In 1999, the Commission entered into the Civic Engagement Project, funded by the Miriam and Peter Haas Fund, the Walter and Elise Haas Fund, the James Irvine Foundation, and the David and Lucile Packard Foundation. This project is assisting the Commission in building ongoing two-way communication with the public, including direct feedback and lateral communication between interested groups and individuals. To implement this project locally, the Commission has entered into a partnership with San Diego State University to test community organizing as a method of community capacity building to support parents, community leaders, and community organizations in addressing issues for children zero to five and their families.



In calendar year 2000, the Commission also entered into the Results for Children Initiative, funded by the Foundation Consortium. This initiative integrates principles of civic engagement/inclusive governance with results based accountability.

#### **Leadership Team**

Both the Civic Engagement Project and the Results for Children Initiative require the Commission to have a steering committee/leadership team to guide public involvement and public relations. A single team, with a blend of community members and public sector employees, has oversight of the two projects and provides recommendations to Commission staff, TPAC, and the Commission. Community members on the team represent TPAC, community based non-profit organizations, faith-based organizations, public broadcasting, and two major universities. Public sector members represent the Commission, public health nursing, the San Diego County Commission on Children, Youth, and Families, and the Strategy and Planning Division of the Health and Human Services Agency. Membership is regionally, ethnically, and gender diverse. The leadership team has made a two-year commitment of time to begin the work of institutionalizing community involvement within the work of the Commission.





# Matrix of Target Audience Strategies

Target Audience	Purpose	Strategy
Families	<ul> <li>Commission activities focus on children ages 0-5 and are responsive to the needs of families</li> <li>Commission provides public education to share information regarding Commission activities and to link families to available resources</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Provide information to families regarding health and well being of children and families</li> <li>Provide information through churches, public libraries and other neighborhood organizations</li> <li>Conduct community conversations at times convenient for family participation</li> <li>Provide childcare at community meetings</li> <li>Ensure that community gatherings are informal and family friendly</li> </ul>
Ethnic Groups	The Commission is responsive to the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse communities	<ul> <li>Obtain input from CBOs* that serve ethnic populations</li> <li>Convene community conversations in ethnic neighborhoods</li> <li>Provide literature in languages other than English</li> <li>Written communications are culturally competent and available in languages other than English</li> <li>Community conversations are conducted in language-appropriate forums</li> <li>Ethnic media are used to disseminate information and promote Commission activities</li> <li>Present Prop 10 information at ESL classes</li> </ul>
Schools	<ul> <li>Commission-funded programs aid in preparing children to enter schools ready to learn</li> <li>Schools provide feedback on fulfilling our mission of school readiness</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Promote child development and parenting education</li> <li>Partner with schools to disseminate information regarding local resources for families and Prop 10 activities</li> <li>Connect with PTAs and other school-based groups to promote community dialogue</li> <li>Provide in-service training/dialogues with kindergarten teachers</li> </ul>

<sup>\*</sup> Community Based Organizations

Target Audience	Purpose	Strategy
Churches/ Temples	Commission seeks input from faith-based organizations regarding the needs of families within their communities	<ul> <li>Coordinate community dialogues through faith-based organizations</li> <li>Faith community disseminates information regarding local resources and Prop 10 activities</li> <li>Fund faith-based service programs</li> </ul>
Community Based Organizations and Collaboratives	Community conversations are coordinated via CBOs and collaboratives to ensure broad, neighborhood-based input     Enhance public trust of Commission activities	<ul> <li>Partner with CBOs and collaboratives to coordinate community conversations</li> <li>Agencies disseminate Prop 10 information in a community-competent manner</li> </ul>
Private Sector Partners	<ul> <li>Engage businesses in adopting family friendly policies</li> <li>Contributes to the development of an adequate future workforce</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Partner with family-oriented private sector organizations (Target, Borders, WalMart etc.) to disseminate information regarding Prop 10 activities and participate in community conversations</li> <li>Educate business about benefits of having a family friendly workplace</li> <li>Support image of business as part of community</li> </ul>
Internal Partners (Commissioners and advisory committees, government agencies, etc.)	Ensure that internal partners are well informed of commission activities and community issues related to Prop 10	<ul> <li>Provide news and updates on Commission activities via newsletter or communication brief</li> <li>Provide debriefings at public meetings</li> </ul>
Health and Social Service Providers	Ensure that     Commission activities     are based on best practices	Obtain professional input via TPAC and community meetings
Child Care Community	<ul> <li>Improve the quality of child care and pre- kindergarten education</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Dialogue with representatives of child care and pre-kindergarten organizations</li> <li>Demonstrate support and advocate for improvements in education and compensation of child care providers</li> </ul>



Target Audience	Purpose	Strategy
General Public	<ul> <li>The Community is informed about Prop 10 activities</li> <li>Commission is accountable to the public for ensuring that Commission activities and funding decisions are responsive to the needs of all San Diego County communities</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Define Prop 10 to promote public understanding of goals</li> <li>Provide news releases to local media</li> <li>Provide information via radio/TV (including PSAs)</li> <li>Provide newsletters and/or communication briefs</li> <li>Partner with public and private organizations to disseminate information</li> <li>Commission communications are simple and easy to understand and tailored to the specific forum</li> <li>Commission communications use a lot of pictures and imagery to promote understanding</li> <li>Convene community conversations throughout San Diego County</li> <li>Provide information to link families to available services</li> <li>Establish task groups to assist in clarifying issues and recommendations</li> <li>Website provides information on Commission activities, funding opportunities, and contact information</li> <li>Provide opportunity for public input at Commission and TPAC meetings</li> <li>Sponsor leadership training to empower public input</li> <li>Follow up with communities with written and oral communication</li> <li>Commission educational activities are responsive to the needs of all communities</li> <li>Coordinate presentations at community forums via Speakers' Bureau</li> <li>Convene focus groups</li> <li>Conduct surveys</li> </ul>



# San Diego County Children and Families Commission

#### 2001 Commissioners

Bill Horn, Chair Sandra McBrayer, Vice Chair Barbara Ryan, Secretary Rodger G. Lum W. Harold Tuck, Jr.

### Acknowledgement

The Commission wishes to thank the following groups for their commitment to engaging the community in the work that we do on behalf of San Diego's children and families. Their support and invaluable assistance helped make "Hand in Hand 4 Kids: A Community Inclusion Plan," possible:

- The Civic Engagement Leadership Team
- $\Theta$  The Technical and Professional Advisory Committee (TPAC)
- $\Theta$  The Results for Children Initiative (RCI), and
- ♦ The Civic Engagement Project (CEP) for Children and Families

















